

Contemporaries appreciate the man rather than the merit; but posterity will regard the merit rather than the man.

All beyond enough is too much; all beyond nourishment is luxury all beyond decency is extravagance.

Form your taste on the classics, and your principles on the book of all truth.

Let the first fruits of your intellect be laid before the altar of Him who breathed into your nostrils the breath of life; and with that breath, you immortal spirit.

The love of learning, though truly commendable, must never be gratified beyond a certain limit. It must not be indulged in to the injury of your health, nor to the hindrance of your virtue.

What will the fame derived from the most profound learning avail you, if you have not learned to be pious and humble, and temperate and charitable.

There is nothing more extraordinary in this country, than the transposition of the seasons. The people of Moscow have no spring. Winter *vanishes*, and summer *is*. This is not the work of a week, or of a day but of one instant; and the manner of it exceeds belief.

On eagles' wings immortal scandals fly,
While virtuous actions are but born and die.

XXIV.

TRANSLATION, OR CONVERSION OF POETRY INTO PROSE.

Poetry when *literally* translated makes in general but inelegant prose. Prose is the language of reason, — poetry of feeling or passion. Prose is characterized by fulness and precision. Poetry deals largely in elliptical expressions, exclamations, exaggerations, apostrophes, and other peculiarities not usually found in prose. For the purpose, also, of accommodating them to the measure of a verse, the poets frequently alter or abbreviate words, and use expressions which would not be authorized in prose. Such abbreviations and alterations, together with other changes sometimes made, are called *poetic licences*, because they are principally used by poetical writers.

The following are some of the licences used by poetical writers.

1. ELISION, or the omission of parts of a word. When the elision is from the beginning of a word, it is called *aphæresis*, and consists in cut-

ting off the initial letter or syllable of a word; as, *'squire* for *esquire* *gainst* for *against*, *'gan* for *began*, &c. When the elision is from the body of the word, it is called *syncope*; as, *list'ning* for *listening*, *thund'ring* for *thundering*, *lov'd* for *loved*, &c. When the elision is from the end of a word it is called *apocope*, and consists in the cutting off of a final vowel or syllable, or of one or more letters; as, *gi' me* for *give me*, *fro'* for *from*, *o'* for *of*, *th' evening* for *the evening*, *Philomel'* for *Philomela*.

2. SYNÆRESIS, or the contraction of two syllables into one, by rapidly pronouncing in one syllable two or more vowels which properly belong to separate syllables; as *ae* in the word *Israel*.

3. APOSTROPHE, or the contraction of two words into one; as, *'tis* for *it is*, *can't* for *cannot*, *thou'rt* for *thou art*.

4. DIÆRESIS, or the division of one syllable into two; as, *pu-is-sant* for *puissant*.

5. PARAGOGE or the addition of an expletive letter; *withouten* for *with-^{out}*, *crouchen* for *crouch*.

6. PROTHESIS, or the prefixing of an expletive letter or syllable to a word; as, *appertinent* for *pertinent*, *belov'd* for *loved*.

7. ENALLAGE, or the use of one part of speech for another; as in the following lines, in which an adjective is used for an adverb; as,

"Blue through the dusk the smoking currents shine."

"The fearful hare limps *awkward*."

8. HYPERBATON, or the inversion or transposition of words, placing that first which should be last; as,

"And though, sometimes, each dreary pause *between*."

"*Him answered* then his loving mate and true."

9. PLEONASM, or the use of a greater number of words than are necessary to express the meaning; as,

"My banks *they* are furnished with bees."

10. TMESIS, or the separation of the parts of a compound word; as, *On which side soever*, for, *On whichsoever side*.

11. ELLIPSIS, or the omission of some parts not absolutely essential to express the meaning, but necessary to complete the grammatical construction.

The poets have likewise other peculiarities which are embraced under the general name of *poetic diction*. In order to accommodate their language to the rules of melody, and that they may be relieved, in some measure, from the restraints which verse imposes on them, they are indulged in the following usages, seldom allowable in prose.

1. They abbreviate nouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, &c.; as, *morn* for *morning*, *amaz* for *amazement*, *fount* for *fountain*, *dread* for *dreadful*, *lone* for *lonely*, *lure* for *allure*, *list* for *listen*, *ope* for *open*, *oft* for *often*, *haply* for *happily*, &c., and use obsolete words* and obsolete meanings.

* Obsolete words are words which, although formerly current, are not now in common use.

2. They make use of ellipses more frequently than prose writers omitting the article, the relative pronoun, and sometimes even its antecedent; using the auxiliaries without the principal verb to which they belong; and on the contrary, they also sometimes make use of repetitions which are seldom observed in prose.

3. They use the infinitive mood for a noun; use adjectives for adverbs, and sometimes even for nouns; and nouns for adjectives; ascribe qualities to things, to which they do not literally belong; form new compound epithets; connect the word *self* with nouns, as well as pronouns; sometimes lengthen a word by an additional letter or syllable, and give to the imperative mood both the first and third persons.

4. They arbitrarily employ or omit the prefixes; use active for neuter and neuter for active verbs; employ participles and interjections more frequently than prose writers; connect words that are not in all respects similar; and use conjunctions in pairs contrary to grammatical rule.

5. They alter the regular arrangement of the words of a sentence placing before the verb words which usually come after it, and after the verb those that usually come before it, putting adjectives after their nouns, the auxiliary after the principal verb; the preposition after the objective case which it governs; the relative before the antecedent; the infinitive mood before the word which governs it; and they also use one mood of the verb for another, employ forms of expression similar to those of other languages, and different from those which belong to the English language.

But one of the most objectionable features of poetic diction is the interjection of numerous details, between those parts of a sentence which are closely combined by the rules of Syntax. Thus, in the following extract from one of the most celebrated poets of the language, generally characterized by the simplicity of his diction, the objective case is placed before the verb which governs it, while a number of circumstances are introduced between them.

But *me*, not destined such delights to share,
My prime of life in wandering spent and care,
Impelled, with steps unceasing, to pursue
Some fleeting good, that mocks me with the view,
That, like the circle bounding earth and skies,
Allures from far, yet, as I follow, flies;
My fortune leads to traverse realms alone,
And find no spot of all the world my own.

Exercises.

[In the following extracts, the student may point out the peculiarities of POETIC DICTION, which have now been enumerated. The words in *Italics* will assist him in recognizing them.]

The cottage curs at early *pilgrim* bark.
The pipe of early *shepherd*.
Affliction's *self* deplores thy youthful doom.
What dreadful pleasure, there to stand sublime,
Like *shipwrecked mariner* on desert coast:
Ah! see! the unsightly slime and sluggish pool,
Have all the solitary *vale* embrowned

Hereditary bondmen! Know ye not
Who would be free *themselves* must strike the blow?

No *fire* the kitchen's cheerless grate *displayed*.

Efflux *avine!* nature's resplendent robe
And thou, O sun!

Soul of surrounding worlds! in whom best seen,
Shines out thy *Maker*; may I sing of thee!

Earth's meanest son, all trembling, prostrate falls,
And on the *boundless* of thy goodness calls.

In *world-rejoicing* state it moves sublime.

Oft in the *stilly* night.

For is there aught in sleep *can charm* the wise?

And *Peace*, O *Virtue!* Peace is all thy own.

Be it dapple's bray,
Or *be it* not, or be it whose it may.

Wealth heaped on wealth, *nor* truth *nor* safety buys.

And sculpture that can keep thee from to die.

The Muses fair, these peaceful *shades* among,
With skilful fingers sweep the trembling strings.

Behoves no more,
But sidelong to the gently waving wind,
To lay the well-tuned instrument reclined.

Had unambitious mortals minded nought
But in loose joy their time to wear away,
Rude nature's state *had been** our state to-day.

In the following exercises the learner is expected to write the ideas conveyed in the poetical extracts, in prose, varying the words and expressions, as well as the arrangement of

* This form of expression, where one mood of the verb is used for another, is sometimes imitated by prose writers. Thus, "Sixty summers had passed over his head without imparting one ray of warmth to his heart; without exciting one tender feeling for the sex, deprived of whose cheering presence, the paradise of the world *were* a wilderness of weeds."—*New Monthly Magazine*. In this extract, the *imperfect of the subjunctive* is used without its attendant conjunction for the pluperfect of the potential. Cowper has a similar expression in his fable entitled "The Needless Alarm," where he uses the pluperfect of the indicative for the pluperfect of the potential: thus,

"Awhile they mused; surveying every face,
Thou *hadst supposed* them of superior race.

them, so as to make clear and distinct sentences,* as in the following

Example.

Reason's whole pleasure, all the joy of sense,
Lie in three words, — health, peace and competence.

Same idea expressed in prose.

Health, peace, and competence comprise all the pleasures which this world can afford.

Example 2d.

The ploughman homeward plods his weary way.

Same line transposed in a variety of ways.

The ploughman plods his weary way homeward.
Homeward the ploughman plods his weary way.
His weary way homeward the ploughman plods.
Plods the ploughman homeward his weary way.
His weary way the ploughman plods homeward.
Homeward plods the ploughman his weary way.
The ploughman his weary way homeward plods.
Plods homeward the ploughman his weary way.
Homeward plods the ploughman his weary way.
His weary way the ploughman homeward plods, &c.

The example shows that it is not always necessary to change the language, in order to convert poetry into prose. Of the ten modes in which the above recited line has been transposed, it will be noticed that several of them are entirely *prosaic*.

It may here be remarked that in the conversion of poetry into

* Sir Walter Scott, in a letter to his son, (*See Lockhart's Life, Vol. V., p. 54.*) has the following language: "You should exercise yourself frequently in trying to make translations of the passages which most strike you, trying to invest the sense of Tacitus in as good English as you can. This will answer the double purpose of making yourself familiar with the Latin author, and giving you the command of your own language, which no person will ever have, who does not study English Composition in early life." The conversion of verse into prose it is conceived will, at least in a good degree, subserve the same useful purpose of giving command of language; and for this reason the exercises in this lesson, or similar ones, cannot be too strongly recommended, especially to those whose minds have not been disciplined by an attention to the classics.

prose, the animation of the style is often endangered. Poetry admits more ornament than prose, and especially a more liberal use of that figure (*Prosopopoeia* or *Personification*) by which life and action are attributed to inanimate objects. The exercises, therefore, of the pupil, in converting poetry into prose, will be deemed useful only as tending to give clear ideas and command of language.*

The learner is presumed now to be prepared to transpose simple tales and stories from verse into prose, with some additions of his own. Such exercises will be found of much use, not only in acquiring command of language, but also as an exercise of the *imagination*. In performing these exercises, the greatest latitude may be allowed, and the learner may be permitted not only to alter the language, but to substitute his own ideas, and to vary the circumstances, so as to make the exercise as nearly an *original one* as he can.

Example.

The following short tale, or story in verse, is presented to be converted into a tale in prose.

GINEVRA.

If ever you should come to Modèna,
(Where, among other relics, you may see
Tassoni's bucket, — but 't is not the true one,)
Stop at a palace near the Reggio gate,
Dwelt in of old by one of the Donati.
Its noble gardens, terrace above terrace,
And rich in fountains, statues, cypresses,
Will long detain you, — but, before you go,
Enter the house, — forget it not, I pray you, —
And look awhile upon a picture there.
'T is of a lady in her earliest youth,
The last of that illustrious family;
Done by Zampieri, — but by whom I care not.
He who observes it, ere he passes on,
Gazes his fill, and comes and comes again,
That he may call it up when far away.
She sits, inclining forward as to speak,
Her lips half open, and her finger up,
As though she said "Beware!" her vest of gold
'Broidered with flowers, and clasped from head to foot,
An emerald stone in every golden clasp;

* Any volume of poetical extracts will furnish additional exercises for the student. It is therefore deemed inexpedient to present in this volume an additional number of them.

And on her brow, fairer than alabaster,
A coronet of pearls.

But then her face,
So lovely, yet so arch, so full of mirth,
The overflowings of an innocent heart,—
It haunts me still, though many a year has fled,
Like some wild melody!

Alone it hangs
Over a mouldering heirloom, its companion,
An oaken chest, half eaten by the worms,
But richly carved by Antony of Trent
With scripture-stories from the life of Christ;
A chest that came from Venice, and had held
The ducal robes of some old ancestor;—
That by the way,—it may be true or false,—
But don't forget the picture; and you will not
When you have heard the tale they old me there
She was an only child,—her name Ginevra,
The joy, the pride of an indulgent father;
And in her fifteenth year became a bride,
Marrying an only son, Francesco Doria,
Her playmate from her birth, and her first love.
Just as she looks there in her bridal dress,
She was all gentleness, all gaiety.
Her pranks the favorite theme of every tongue.
But now the day was come, the day, the hour;
Now, frowning, smiling, for the hundredth time,
The nurse, that ancient lady, preached decorum;
And, in the lustre of her youth, she gave
Her hand, with her heart in it, to Francesco.
Great was the joy; but at the nuptial feast,
When all sate down, the bride herself was wanting
Nor was she to be found! Her father cried,
" 'T is but to make a trial of our love!"
And filled his glass to all; but his hand shook,
And soon from guest to guest the panic spread.
'T was but that instant she had left Francesco,
Laughing, and looking back and flying still,
Her ivory tooth imprinted on his finger,
But now, alas, she was not to be found;
Nor from that hour could any thing be guessed,
But that she was not!

Weary of his life,
Francesco flew to Venice, and embarking,
Flung it away in battle with the Turk.
Donati lived,—and long might you have seen
An old man wandering as in quest of something,
Something he could not find,—he knew not what.
When he was gone, the house remained awhile
Silent and tenantless,—then went to strangers.

Full fifty years were past, and all forgotten,
When, on an idle day, a day of search
'Mid the old lumber in the gallery,
That mouldering chest was noticed; and 't was said
By one as young, as thoughtless as Ginevra,
" Why not remove it from its lurking-place?"
'T was done as soon as said; but on the way
It burst, it fell; and lo! a skeleton
With here and there a pearl, an emerald-stone,

A golden clasp, clasping a shred of gold.
All else had perished,—save a wedding ring,
And a small seal, her mother's legacy,
Engraven with a name, the name of both—
" Ginevra" —

There then had she found a grave!
Within that chest had she concealed herself,
Fluttering with joy, the happiest of the happy;
When a spring-lock, that lay in ambush there,
Fastened her down for ever!

Conversion of the preceding Story into Prose.

THE LEGEND OF MODENA.*

In an elegant apartment of a palace overlooking the Reggio gate in Modena, which, about fifty years before, belonged to the noble family of Donati, but which now was occupied by a very distant branch of that illustrious race, sat the loveliest of its descendants—the beautiful Beatrice, the flower of Modena. Upon the marble table and embroidered ottomans before her, lay a variety of rich costumes, which her favorite attendant, Laura, was arranging where their rich folds fell most gracefully, and their bright tints mocked the rainbows hues of colored light; for the fair Beatrice was selecting a becoming attire for a masquerade ball, which was to be given during the gay season of the approaching Carnival. But a shadow of discontent rested on her brow, as she surveyed the splendid dresses—they were too common-place—and she turned from them with disdain. Suddenly her eye rested upon an antique picture, hanging on the tapestried wall, which represented a young and beautiful figure in the attitude of

" Inclining forward, as to speak,
Her lips half open and her finger up,
As though she said ' Beware!' her vest of gold
Brodered with flowers and clasped from head to foot,
An emerald stone in every golden clasp,
And on her brow—a coronet of pearls."

Pushing aside the costly silks and velvets, she ran to look at the picture more closely. The lady's dress was perfect, she thought; it just suited her capricious taste, and one like it she determined to have and wear, at the approaching festival. In vain Laura expostulated, and the difficulty of obtaining such an antiquated costume was brought to her mind, and finally, the legend connected with the portrait was begun. But the wilful Beatrice would not listen, although a destiny, sad as that of the ill-fated lady of the portrait was predicted, if she persevered in her whim. Regardless of remonstrance, Beatrice proceeded to search among the finery of her ancestors for something to correspond with the dress which she determined to have, spite of all their old legends, which she

* This "Legend" was written by a young lady of about thirteen years of age, and presented as an exercise at the public school in this city, under the charge of the author.

did not believe. But she searched in vain, and she was returning through the gallery almost in despair, when her attention was attracted by an old

"Oaken chest half eaten by the worms,
And richly carved,"

which she thought might contain something suitable. Impatiently she waited, while her attendants lifted the mouldering cover, and then bent eagerly forward to look at its contents—she shrieked and fell into the arms of Laura, a skeleton met her eye,

"With here and there a pearl, an emerald stone,
A golden clasp, clasping a shred of gold."

The legend of the unfortunate lady of the portrait was indeed true—these were her remains. Beatrice was carried to her room, and a month passed before she recovered from a fever occasioned by the fright and excitement she experienced; and never again did she mingle in the dissipated circle of her native city. These scenes had lost their charms—for the skeleton and its history continually presented themselves to her mind, reminding her, that "in the midst of life we are in death," and warning her to prepare for that change which must occur in the course of our existence. After a while, Beatrice lost these gloomy sensations, and became cheerful and happy in the performance of duty, and participated in those innocent amusements of life, which she enjoyed far better than those absorbing pleasures, which she used to admire. The old chest and portrait were placed carefully together, and Beatrice ever after wore the wedding ring and the seal inscribed with the name, "Genevra," which had been found among the other relics of the chest. She also wrote, for the perusal of her friends, the following story connected with the picture and its mouldering companion.

GINEVRA.

"And she indeed was beautiful,
A creature to behold with trembling 'midst our joy,
Lest ought unseen should waft the vision from us,
Leaving earth too dim without its brightness."

"The deep gold of eventide burned in the Italian sky," and the wind, passing through the orange groves and over the terraces which surrounded the palace of the Donati, mingled its soft, sweet sighs with the murmuring of the fountains, which sparkled in the moonbeams, occasionally sending a shower of spray over the waving foliage that shadowed them. At a window, overlooking this moon-lit scene, stood Genevra, the only child of Donati, "the joy, the pride of an indulgent father." Indeed, her gentleness and sportiveness made her loved by all, and

"Her pranks, the favorite theme of every tongue."

She had seen but fifteen summers, and these had glided away like a fairy dream,—and then

"Her face so lovely, yet so arch, so full of mirth,
The overflowings of an innocent heart."

And there she stood, looking at those old familiar scenes, till a tear glittered in her dark eye, and a shade of sadness rested on her fair brow, like a cloud shadowing her "sunny skies";—for, on the morrow, she was to part from her childhood's home, she was "to give her hand, with her heart in it," to Francesco Doria, a brave and handsome son of that noble family, whose name often occurs in the annals of Italy. Long did Genevra linger at the window. "My only one." The voice was her father's, who, accompanied by Francesco, came to seek her; and there they remained, looking out on that lovely scene; and many were the joyous anticipations, the bright hopes, the dreams of happiness which mingled in their conversation, while Francesco plucked the white flowers from a vine which hung across the casement, and wreathed them in Genevra's long dark curls. But a neighboring convent bell warned them to seek repose, and reluctantly they parted to dream of the morrow, which they fondly thought would bring with it the realization of their bright hopes.

"The morn is up again, the dewy morn," and sunlight and dewdrops were weaving bright rainbow webs over shrub and flower, and the fresh morning breeze blew the vines across the marble pillars of the colonnade, which echoed with the merry voices,—the gay laugh, and the light step of the proud and beautiful assemblage, collected to grace the wedding of Donati's lovely daughter. And lovely, indeed, did she appear among Italy's fairest children. Her dress of rich green velvet, clasped with emeralds, set in gold, the pearls shining among her dark curls, added to her loveliness, and made her appear the star of that bright company. Proudly and fondly her father and husband watched her graceful form, as she glided among the gay throng, receiving their congratulations as the bride of Francesco Doria. Nothing seemed wanting to complete their happiness. Mirth and festivity, the song and the dance, all lent their attractions and added to their felicity. Ah! did not that happy father and fond husband know that such happiness is not for earth?

"Fear ye the festal hour;
Ay, tremble when the cup of joy o'erflows!
Tame down the swelling heart! The bridal rose
And the rich myrtle's flower
Have veiled thee, Death!"

Gaily the hours passed by; Genevra was all gaiety, half wild with excitement. As she passed Francesco, she whispered her intention of hiding, and challenged him and her gay associates to find her. Soon were they all in search of the fair bride, and merrily they proceeded through the lofty halls, the dark closets, and secret apartments of that spacious palace, which resounded with merry voices and laughter. Long they looked, but vainly; and, as the shades of evening stole over the scene, wearied and alarmed, nearly all the now dismayed guests retired to their homes, for Genevra was nowhere to be found. Donati and Francesco, half frantic, continued the search, which grew hourly more hopeless. Week after week, months passed away, but nothing was heard of the lost one. Francesco, weary of that life which was now deprived of all that endeared it to earth, joined the army of his countrymen,

"And flung it away in battle with the Turk."

Donati still lingered around that home, so connected with the memory of her whom he idolized, who was now lost to him for ever;

"And long might you have seen,
An old man wandering, as in quest of something,
Something he could not find — he knew not what."

And where was Ginevra? Half breathless with haste, she ran to an old gallery in the upper part of the palace, fancying her pursuers had almost overtaken her. As she hastily glanced round the dimly lighted gallery, in search of a hiding place, her eye rested on an oaken chest, beautifully carved and ornamented by a celebrated sculptor of Venice, which once held the robes of a prince of her illustrious race. Quick as thought, Ginevra exerted her strength to raise the cover. The chest easily held her fragile form. Trembling with joy and excitement, she heard the loved and well-known tones of Francesco's voice, who was foremost in pursuing her; when her hand, which held the cover ajar to admit the air, slipped and it fell, "fastening her down for ever." The chest was constructed, for greater security, with a spring, which locked as it was shut, and could only be opened by one outside touching a particular part of the curious workmanship. But, before Francesco reached the gallery, the lovely and unfortunate girl had ceased to breathe in that closely shut chest. Many times they passed the gallery, but they heeded not the hiding-place of the lost bride; which, alas! was destined to be her grave. No flowers could shed their perfumes over her grave, watered by the tears of those that loved her. Her fate was a mystery, and soon her memory passed away, like all the fleeting things of earth. And Donati, — what had he to live for? In the beautiful language of Mrs. Hemans, he might have said,

"It is enough! mine eye no more of joy or splendor sees!
I go, since earth its flower hath lost, to join the bright and fair,
And call the grave a lovely place, for thou, my child, art there."

Examples for practice may be taken from any source which the teacher or the student may select.

XXV.

ANAGRAMS.

An anagram is the transposition of the letters of a word, or short sentence, so as to form another word, or phrase, with a different meaning. Thus, the letters which compose the word *stone*, may be arranged so as to form the words *tones*, *notes*, or *seton*; and, (taking *j* and *v* as duplicates of *i* and *u*,) the letters of the alphabet may be arranged so as to form the words *Styx*, *Phlegm*, *quiz*, *frown'd* and *back*.*

* Pilate's question to Jesus, "Quid est veritas?" (What is truth?) has

Examples.

Astronomers,	Moon-starers.
Telegraphs,	Great Helps.
Gallantries,	All great sins.
Democratical,	Comical trade.
Encyclopedia,	A nice cold pie.
Lawyers,	Sly ware.
Misanthrope,	Spare him not.
Monarch,	March on.
Old England,	Golden Land.
Presbyterian,	Best in prayer.
Punishment,	Nine Thumps.
Penitentiary,	Nay, I repent it.
Radical Reform,	Rare mad frolic.
Revolution,	To love ruin.
James Stuart,	A just master.
Charles James Stuart,	Claims Arthur's Seat.
Eleanor Davies,*	Reveal, O Daniel.
Dame Eleanor Davies,	Never so mad a Ladie.

For exercises of practice, the student may select his own words or sentences. As it is a mere literary amusement, the exercise is not considered worthy of much attention.

been happily converted in an anagram to the words, "*Est vir qui adest*," (It is the man who is before you.)

Jablonski welcomed the visit of Stanislaus, King of Poland, with his noble relatives of the house of Lescinski, to the annual examination of the students under his care, at the gymnasium of Lissa, with a number of anagrams, all composed of the letters in the words *Domus Lescinia*. The recitations closed with an heroic dance, in which each youth carried a shield inscribed with a legend of the letters. After a new evolution, the boys exhibited the words *Ades incolumis*; next, *Omnis es lucida*; next, *Omne sis lucida*; fifthly, *Mane sidus loci*; sixthly, *Sis columna Dei*; and at the conclusion, *I scande solium*.

But a still more remarkable anagram than any that has been presented, will be found in the Greek inscription on the Mosque of St. Sophia, in Constantinople:

"Νίλον ἀνομήματα μη μοναν οψα,"

which present the same words, whether read from left to right, or from right to left.

Sir Isaac Newton was in the habit of concealing his mathematical discoveries, by depositing the principles in the form of anagrams; by which he might afterwards claim the merit of the invention without its being stolen by others.

* This lady fancied herself a prophetess, and supposed the spirit of Daniel to be in her, because this anagram could be formed from her name. But her anagram was faulty, as it contained an *l* too much, and an *s* too little. She was completely put down by the anagram made from the name *Dame Eleanor Davies*, "Never so mad a ladie."

XXVI.

OF GRAMMATICAL PROPRIETY.

Although the details of Grammar and grammatical rule are not embraced in the plan of this work, it will be proper to present some observations, by way of review, with regard to those principles which are most frequently disregarded or forgotten by careless writers. Some remarks have already been made with regard to a few of the improprieties which are frequently observed, even in writers of respectability. The considerations now to be offered are presented in the form of directions.

DIRECTION 1st. In determining the number of a verb, regard must be had to the *idea* which is embraced in the subject or nominative. Whenever the idea of *plurality* is conveyed, whether it be expressed by one word, or one hundred, and however connected, and in whatever number the subject may be, whether singular or plural, all verbs relating to it must be made to agree, not with the number of the *word* or *words*, but with the number of the *idea* conveyed by the words.

DIRECTION 2d. In the use of pronouns, the same remark applies, namely, that the number of the pronoun must coincide with the *idea* contained in the word, or words, to which the pronoun relates. If it imply unity, the pronoun must be singular; if it convey plurality, the pronoun must be plural. These directions will be better understood by an example.

Thus, in the sentence, "Each of them, in *their* turn, *receive* the benefits to which *they* are entitled," the verbs and pronouns are in the wrong number. The word *each*, although it includes *all*, implies but *one at a time*. The *idea*, therefore, is the idea of *unity*, and the verb and pronoun should be singular, thus, "Each of them in *his* turn *receives* the benefit to which *he* is entitled."

The same remark may be made with regard to the following sentences: "Every person, whatever be *their* (his) station, is bound by the duties of morality." "The wheel killed another man, who is the sixth that *have* (has) lost *their* (his) *lives* (life) by these means." "I do not think that any one should incur censure for being tender of *their* (his) reputation."

DIRECTION 3d. In the use of verbs and words which express time, care must be taken that the proper tense be employed to express the time that is intended. Perhaps there is no rule more frequently violated than this, even by good writers; but young writers are very prone to the error. Thus, the author of the Waverley Novels has the following sentence:*

* See Parker's 12mo edition of the Waverley Novels, Vol. XIII. p. 14.

"Description," he said, "*was* (is) to the author of a romance, exactly what drawing and tinting *were* (are) to a painter; words *were* (are) his colors, and, if properly employed, they *could* (can) not fail to place the scene which he *wished* (wishes) to conjure up, as effectually before the mind's eye, as the tablet or canvass presents it to the bodily organ. The same rules," he continued, "*applied* (apply) to both, and an exuberance of dialogue in the former case, *was* (is) a verbose and laborious mode of composition, which *went* (goes) to confound the proper art of the drama, a widely different species of composition, of which dialogue *was* (is) the very essence; because all, excepting the language to be made use of, *was* (is) presented to the eye by the dresses, and persons, and actions, of the performers upon the stage."

The author was misled throughout in the tenses of the verbs in this extract, by the tense of the verb *said*, with which he introduces it.

DIRECTION 4th. Whenever several verbs belonging to one common subject occur in a sentence, the subject or nominative must be repeated whenever there is a change in the mood, tense, or form of the verb.

DIRECTION 5th. In the use of the comparative and superlative degrees of the adjective, it is to be remarked, that when two things or persons only are compared, the comparative degree, and not the superlative, should be used. Thus, in the sentence, "Catharine and Mary are both well attired; but, in their appearance, Catharine is the neatest, Mary the most showy;" the superlative degree of the adjective is improperly applied. As there are but two persons spoken of, the adjectives should be in the comparative degree namely *neater* and *more showy*.

DIRECTION 6th. Neuter and intransitive verbs should never be used in the passive form. Such expressions as *was gone*, *is grown*, *is fallen*, *is come*,* *may be relied on*, &c., although used by some good writers, are objectionable.

* Although this form of expression is sanctioned by Murray, Lowth, and other good authorities, yet reason and analogy will not justify us in assenting to their decision; for, besides the awkwardness of the expression, it is objectionable as being an unnecessary anomaly. But the author has been influenced in his rejection of such expressions, by the very sensible and conclusive remarks of Mr. Pickbourn, in a very learned work, entitled "A Dissertation on the English Verb," published in London, 1759. Dr. Priestley, in his "Grammar," page 127, says, "It seems not to have been determined by the English grammarians, whether the passive participles of verbs neuter require the auxiliary *am* or *have* before them. The French, in this case, confine themselves strictly to the former." "This remark," says Mr. Pickbourn, "concerning the manner of using the participles of French neuter verbs is certainly not well founded; for *most of them* are conjugated with *avoir*, to have."

Such expressions as the following have recently become very common, not only in the periodical publications of the day, but are likewise finding favor with popular writers; as, "The house is being *built*." "The street is being *paved*." "The actions that are now being *performed*," &c. "The patents are being *prepared*." The usage of the best writers does not sanction these expressions; and Mr. Pickbourn, in the work just quoted, lays down the following principle, which is conclusive upon the subject. "*Whenever the participle in ing* is joined by an auxiliary verb to a nomina

DIRECTION 7th. In the use of irregular verbs, a proper distinction should be made in the use of the imperfect tense and the perfect participle.

He *done* (did) it at my request: He *run* (ran) a great risk: He has *mistook* (mistaken) his true interest: The cloth was *wove* (woven) of the finest wool: He writes as the best authors would have *wrote* (written) had they *writ* (written) on the subject: The bell has been *rang* (rung): I have *spoke* (spoken) to him upon the subject. These sentences are in stances where the proper distinction between the preterite and participle has not been preserved.

DIRECTION 8th. The negative adverb must be followed by the negative conjunction; as, "The work is *not* capable of pleasing the understanding, *nor* (not *or*) the imagination." The sentence would be improved by using the conjunctions in pairs, substituting *neither* for *not*.

In the following sentences, the conjunction *but* is improperly used. "I cannot deny *but* that I was in fault." "It cannot be doubted *but* that this is a state of positive gratification," &c.

DIRECTION 9th. There must be no ellipsis of any word, when such ellipsis would occasion obscurity. Thus, when we speak of "the laws of God and man," it is uncertain whether one or two codes of laws are meant; but, in the expression, "the laws of God, and the laws of man," the obscurity vanishes. A nice distinction in sense is made by the use or omission of the articles. "A white and red house," means *but one* house; but, "A white and a red house," means two houses. In the expression "She has a little modesty," the meaning is positive; but, by omitting the article, "She has little modesty," the meaning becomes negative. The position of the article, also, frequently makes a great difference in the sense, as will be seen in the following examples: "As delicate a little thing;" "As a delicate little thing."

DIRECTION 10th. The adverb should always be placed as near as possible to the word which it is designed to qualify. Its proper position is generally before adjectives, after verbs, and frequently between the auxiliary and the verb. The following sentence exhibits an instance of the improper location of the adverb: "It had *almost* been his daily custom at a certain hour, to visit Admiral Priestman." The adverb *almost* should have been placed before *daily*.

DIRECTION 11th. In the use of passive and neuter verbs, care must be taken that the proper nominative is applied. That which is the object of the active verb, must in all cases be the subject or nominative of the passive verb. Thus, we say, with the active verb, "They offered him mercy" (i. e. to him); and, with the passive verb, "Mercy was offered to

him;" not, "He was offered mercy," because "mercy," and not "he," is the thing which was offered. It is better to alter the expression, by substituting a synonyme with a proper nominative or subject, than to introduce such confusion of language, as must necessarily result from a change in the positive, fixed, and true significations of words, or from a useless violation of grammatical propriety.

In accordance with this direction, (see, also, Direction 6th.)

<i>instead of</i>	<i>it would be better to say</i>
He was prevailed on,	He was persuaded.
He was spoken to,	He was addressed.
She was listened to,	She was heard.
They were looked at,	They were seen, <i>or</i> viewed.
It is approved of,	It is liked, <i>or</i> commended.
He was spoken of,	He was named, <i>or</i> mentioned.
It is contended for,	It is maintained, <i>or</i> contested.
It was thought of,	It was remembered, <i>or</i> conceived.
He was called on by his friend,	He was visited by his friend.
These examples are commented upon with much humor,	These examples are ridiculed with much humor.
He was referred to as an oracle.	He was consulted as an oracle.

DIRECTION 12th. All the parts of a sentence should be constructed in such a manner that there shall appear to be no want of agreement or connexion among them. Thus, the following sentence, "He was more beloved, but not so much admired as Cynthio," is inaccurate, because, when it is analyzed, it will be, "He was more beloved *as* Cynthio," &c. The adverb *more* requires the conjunction *than* after it; and the sentence should be, "He was more beloved *than* Cynthio, but not so much admired."

Again; in the sentence, "If a man *have* a hundred sheep, and one of them *goes* astray," &c., the subjunctive mood, *have*, is used after the conjunction *if*, in the first part of the sentence, and the indicative, *goes*, in the second. Both of these verbs should be in the indicative, or both in the subjunctive mood.

No definite rule can be given, which will enable the learner to make the parts of a sentence agree in themselves, and with one another. They should be diligently compared, and a similarity of construction be carefully maintained; while the learner will recollect, that no sentence can be considered grammatically correct, which cannot be analyzed or parsed by the authorized rules of syntax.

[Examples for practice, under these principles, may be found in Parker and Fox's "Grammar," Part II., or in Murray's "Exercises." It has not been deemed expedient to insert them here.]

XXVII.

ON THE SELECTION OF WORDS AND EXPRESSIONS

Besides grammatical correctness, the student who aims at being a good speaker and a good writer must pay attention to the *style*, or manner of expressing his ideas. Rules relating to this subject pertain to the science of rhetoric.

Perspicuity, (by which is meant clearness to the mind, easiness to be understood, freedom from obscurity or ambiguity) should be the fundamental quality of style; and the study of perspicuity and accuracy of expression requires attention, first, to words and phrases, and secondly, to the construction of sentences.

Of Words and Phrases.

The words and phrases employed in the expression of our ideas should have the three properties called *purity*, *propriety*, and *precision*.

Purity consists in the use of such words, and such constructions, as belong to the idiom of the language which we speak; in opposition to words and phrases that are taken from other languages, or that are ungrammatical, obsolete, newly coined, or used without proper authority.

Purity may be violated in three different ways. First, the words may not be English. This fault is called a *barbarism*. Secondly, the construction of the word may not be in the English idiom. This fault is called a *solecism*.

Thirdly, the words and phrases may not be employed to express the precise meaning which custom has affixed to them. This fault is termed an *impropriety*.

Propriety of language consists in the selection of such words as the best usage has appropriated to those ideas which we intend to express by them; in opposition to low expressions, and to words and phrases which would be less significant of the ideas that we mean to convey.

There are seven principal rules for the preservation of propriety.

1. Avoid low expressions.
2. Supply words that are wanting.
3. Be careful not to use the same word in different senses.

4. Avoid the injudicious use of technical terms; that is, terms or expressions which are used in some art, occupation, or profession.
5. Avoid equivocal, or ambiguous words.
6. Avoid unintelligible and inconsistent words or phrases.
7. Avoid all such words and phrases as are not adapted to the ideas intended to be communicated.

Precision signifies the retrenching of superfluities and the pruning of the expression, so as to exhibit neither more nor less than an exact copy of the person's idea who uses it.*

The words used to express ideas may be faulty in three respects, *First*, they may not express the idea which the author intends, but some other which only resembles it; *secondly*, they may express that idea, but not fully and completely; *thirdly*, they may express it, together with something more than is intended. Precision stands opposed to these three faults, but chiefly to the last. Propriety implies a freedom from the two former faults. The words which are used may be *proper*; that is, they may express the idea intended, and they may express it fully; but to be *precise*, signifies that they express *that idea and no more*.

The great source of a loose style in opposition to precision, is the injudicious use of words termed *synonymous*. They are called synonymous because they agree in expressing one principal idea; but, for the most part, if not always, they express it with some diversity in the circumstances.†

While we are attending to precision, we must be on our guard, lest, from the desire of pruning too closely, we retrench all copiousness. To unite copiousness and precision, to be full and easy, and at the same time correct and exact in the choice of every word, is, no doubt, one of the highest and most difficult attainments in writing.

XXVIII.

OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF SENTENCES. †

Sentences, in general, should neither be very long, nor very short; long ones require close attention to make us

* Precision is promoted by the omission of unnecessary words and phrases; and is opposed to Tautology, or the repetition of the same sense in different words; and to Pleonasm, or the use of superfluous words.

† See Lesson XIX. The student who wishes for exercises on the subjects of purity, propriety, and precision, will find them in Parker and Fox's Grammar, Part III., pp. 78-86, or in Murray's Exercises, (Alger's Edition.)

‡ The substance of the remarks on this subject, is taken from Blair's Rhetoric. A great part of the language, also, is copied literally from that work.